

University of Montana

ScholarWorks at University of Montana

Graduate Student Theses, Dissertations, &
Professional Papers

Graduate School

2005

Investigation of the initiation of short-term relationships in a vacation setting.

Aneta Milojevic
The University of Montana

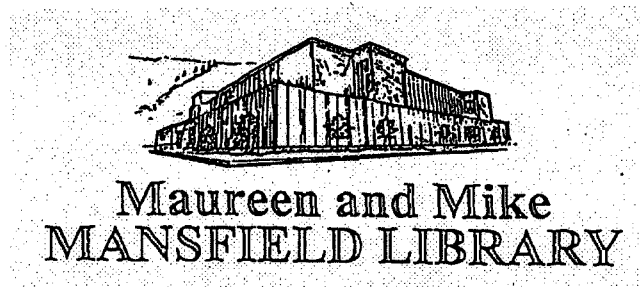
Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/etd>

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Recommended Citation

Milojevic, Aneta, "Investigation of the initiation of short-term relationships in a vacation setting." (2005).
Graduate Student Theses, Dissertations, & Professional Papers. 5437.
<https://scholarworks.umt.edu/etd/5437>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Student Theses, Dissertations, & Professional Papers by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.



The University of
Montana

Permission is granted by the author to reproduce this material in its entirety, provided that this material is used for scholarly purposes and is properly cited in published works and reports.

****Please check "Yes" or "No" and provide signature****

Yes, I grant permission

X

No, I do not grant permission

Author's Signature: Aneth milg

Date: July 13, 2005

Any copying for commercial purposes or financial gain may be undertaken only with the author's explicit consent.

An Investigation of the Initiation of Short-Term Relationships in a Vacation Setting

by

Aneta Milojevic

B.S., University of Idaho, 2003

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Master of Arts

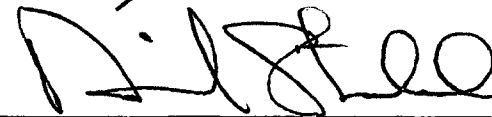
The University of Montana

July 2005

Approved by:



Chairman



Dean, Graduate School

7-15-05

Date

UMI Number: EP40901

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



UMI EP40901

Published by ProQuest LLC (2014). Copyright in the Dissertation held by the Author.

Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

All rights reserved. This work is protected against
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code



ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 - 1346

An Investigation of the Initiation of Short-Term Relationships in a Vacation Setting

Chairman: Stephen Yoshimura



ABSTRACT

This study focused on the initiation process of short-term romantic relationships while on spring break vacation. Previous research has identified that the vacation setting lends itself to more lenient attitudes towards casual sex, thus making them a prime location for the initiation of short-term romantic relationships.

Three research questions and two hypotheses served as the basis for this study. The first research question asked how many college students initiate short-term relationships on vacation. The second question raised was which motivating factors have a greater influence on the initiation of these relationships. The final question asked what types of self-presentation strategies are used in initiating a short-term relationship on vacation. The first prediction was that males would communicate more interest in initiating a short-term relationship on vacation. Second, it was predicted that males would place a higher value on physical attractiveness for a short-term partner, while females would place a higher value on status-linked characteristics.

The results revealed numerous gender differences, as well as some similarities. Men more than women reported initiating short-term relationships on vacation, as well as reporting being influenced by personal, sex partner, and physical environment factors. Women reported being more selective in preferred partner characteristics, and women also reported a higher frequency of enacted initiation strategies. The results of this study are consistent with an evolutionary perspective of human mating.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Although I would like to take full credit for this paper, I think it would be unfair. There have been far too many people in my life that deserve as much credit and thanks for this paper as I do. First and foremost, I would like to thank my friends and family, in Idaho and across the globe. In the past 24 years, I have received nothing but love, encouragement and happiness from you all. It makes me proud to know I have such a loving group of people surrounding me and I hope that I will continue to make you all proud. I love you all.

This project could not have been completed without the support, encouragement, and direction of my advisor, Steve Yoshimura. Thank you so much for all of your help. Your reassuring comments helped me believe in myself and realize that my “silly” topic was one of value. It has been my pleasure taking your courses and being your advisee. Any student should be so lucky to have you as their instructor and /or advisor. I should also thank you for making me an APA master. My editorial skills have been called upon numerous times, and without my papers being marked up from beginning to end, I could never have learned the beauty of APA style. I also owe a big thanks to Christina Yoshimura. Thank you for being on my committee, as well as being a friend. All of your guidance and support in and out of school has been greatly appreciated. Your sparkling demeanor is a pleasure to be around and I consider myself lucky to have been able to work with you. To both Steve and Christina, I am very fortunate to have been able to work with such great people. Thank you for everything and I am sorry to have invaded your breakfast conversation with thesis talk. Finally, I would like to thank Annie Sondag for her time and input with this paper. Your perspective allowed me to write a more complete and well-rounded paper. Keep your eyes open and maybe one day I will be on 60 Minutes!

The two years I spent in the graduate program at the University of Montana have been two of the most exciting years of my life. The friends I have made in my time in Montana have definitely made the roller coaster ride of school worthwhile. I would like to thank my Idaho girls, Shelby Long and Nichole Woods for everything. From our countless nights going out to just doing nothing, every time spent with the both of you was memorable. You are some of my best friends and I am forever grateful for your friendship. Matt Isbell and Kelly Rossetto, from my first year to my second year you both were there for me. Thanks for all of the great life conversations, as well as the conversations that who knows where they came from. Good luck in Texas and who knows maybe one day I'll be a longhorn too! Andrea Richards, you are brilliant and beautiful. Thanks for being such a good friend and going out buddy. I know one day your life will come out of complete shambles! Clair Canfield, you are an amazing man. Thanks for the perfect timing of everything. To the rest of the commies, thanks for helping me become the person I am today. In and out of school I have learned so much about life and am grateful to every one of you. Lastly, I must thank my roommates from my first year in Missoula. Scott Grasky, Matt Peak, Paul Boyd, and last but definitely not least Keri Geopfert, I don't know what to say. Thanks for being so radically different and wonderful. You opened my eyes to Missoula and so much more. I've had such a great time with all of you and couldn't imagine not knowing any of you. Oh, and I should give you guys some credit with inspiring me to write this paper on this particular topic.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Rationale and Literature Review	1
Rationale	1
Literature Review	3
Evolutionary theory	4
Short-term relationships	10
Evolutionary theory and initiation of short-term relationships	15
Initiation of short-term relationships	19
Chapter 2: Methods	23
Participants	23
Instruments	23
Procedure	26
Chapter 3: Results	28
How many people participate in short-term relationships on vacation?	28
Who communicates more interest in initiating short-term relationships on vacation?	28
Which factors have a greater influence on short-term relationships on vacation?	28
Which characteristics are preferred in potential partners?	30
What strategies are used in initiating short-term relationships?	34
Chapter 4: Discussion	36
Short-term romantic relationships and their occurrence on vacation	36
Pursuing short-term romantic relationships	37

Motivating factors and short-term romantic relationships	38
Preferred characteristics of short-term relationship partners	43
Initiation strategies used in short-term romantic relationships	46
Limitations & Future considerations	48
Conclusion	50
References	52
Appendix A: Short-Term Relationships Instrument	58
Appendix B: University of Montana Consent Form	64
Appendix C: University of Texas at Austin Consent Form	66
Appendix D: University of Idaho Consent Form	68

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations for Factors Influencing Short-Term Relationship Initiation (Overall Population)	30
Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations for Factors Influencing Short-Term Relationship Initiation (Short-Term Relationship Population)	30
Table 3: Means and Standard Deviations for Characteristics Reported for Potential Short-Term Relationship Partners	33
Table 4: Means and Standard Deviations of Initiation Strategies Used in Short-Term Relationships on Vacation	35

CHAPTER 1: RATIONALE AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Rationale

Researchers have long been interested in studying romantic relationships and the many facets surrounding these relationships. Vast areas of research conducted by communication scholars on romantic relationships include relationship initiation (Buss & Barnes, 1986; Clatterbuck, 1980; Tooke & Camire, 1991; Trost & Alberts, 1998), relationship maintenance (Canary & Zelley, 1999; Duck, Rutt, Hurst, & Strejc, 1991), emotional expressivity in relationships (Taraban, Hendrick, & Hendrick, 1998), and social networks (Klein & Milardo, 2000; Parks, 2000) among countless other areas of interest.

There are, however, several areas of personal relationships that have gone understudied and deserve an in-depth examination. Long-distance relationships (Dainton & Aylor, 2001), cross-sex friendships (Afifi & Faulkner, 2000), same-sex relationships (Peplau & Spalding, 2000), and the so-called “dark side” of relationships (Guerrero & Andersen, 1998) have recently been explored by a number of communication scholars in an attempt to create a fuller understanding of the true reality of personal relationships. Yet much is left to be explored and uncovered, which is the purpose behind this research project.

Attention to short-term relationships has been neglected within personal relationships research. Societal norms surrounding long-term relationships have made it difficult to study short-term relationships, as such relationships may often be kept in secrecy. Steady dating, and to a greater extent, marriage, are better accepted than are one-night stands or brief affairs, and thus are readily accessible for research. However,

the fact remains that people disregard societal expectations and norms and partake in short-term relationships.

A clearer understanding of the people who participate in short-term relationships and the decisions made in pursuing this type of relationship will advance and benefit current literature on short-term relationships and personal relationships in general. Specifically, the initiation of a consensually agreed upon sexual relationship between two people who have no previous history with one another will be examined. For purposes of this paper, a short-term relationship is defined as a consensually agreed upon relationship lasting the duration of a vacation and that includes sexual activity with the previously unknown person. In light of the lack of research on short-term relationships, the purpose behind this project is to shed new light on an area that has not been readily studied and to provide a new perspective into how and why short-term relationships occur. With a better understanding of the motivations behind short-term relationships, we can get a better look at contemporary relationships and the people who partake in them. Moreover, this study adds to the already existing body of literature surrounding evolutionary theory, but within a more specific context than the typical home environment, which is normally studied.

This research has the potential to impact research on both personal relationships research and health communication. Within personal relationships research, we stand to come to a new understanding of the initiation and maintenance of short-term relationships. Uncovering why someone would initiate a relationship that may only last for a few days is of great interest. Unless the newly formed couple plans to continue the relationship long-distance, expending the valuable time and resources of both individuals

could be a complete waste. This in turn can lend itself to the study of long-distance relationships and the maintenance strategies employed to further the relationship. An investigation into the reasoning behind such actions as initiating short-term relationships is clearly warranted.

Literature Review

This study investigates short-term relationships initiated by college students during vacation. College students are one of many populations who look forward to their vacations from work and school. They want to get away from it all, to forget about school and their hectic workload for at least a short time. Some hope to go to exotic places with their friends, to hang out, to party and maybe to meet someone whom they can get involved with. Past research has found that being away from home and being free from responsibilities creates situational disinhibition, thus making it more likely to engage in short-term relationships (Eiser & Ford, 1995; Mewhinney, Herold & Maticka-Tyndale, 1995). Mewhinney and colleagues (1995) found that accepting attitudes towards casual sex increased in vacation settings due to “the belief that one would not be judged for one’s behaviour, the sense of anonymity, and the normative acceptance of casual sex on Spring Break” (p. 277). Josiam, Hobson, Dietrich and Smeaton (1998) found similar results in their study of student behavior on spring break and concluded that vacation travel is “perceived as a means of meeting new sexual partners, rather than an occasion for a romantic getaways with an ongoing partner” (p. 505). In consideration of past research and taking into account most vacations last only a few days, relationships initiated and sustained with a previously unknown person during the course of a vacation are a prime example of short-term relationships. Examining such relationships will

provide a basis for developing explanations of how short-term relationships are initiated while on vacation. To get the most basic understanding of short-term relationships that are initiated on vacation, research question one was developed:

RQ1: What percentage of college students participate in short-term relationships while on vacation?

Past research on short-term relationships has focused on various areas including, but not limited to, comparing short-term relationships to the more socially accepted long-term relationships (Stewart, Stinnett, & Rosenfeld, 2000; Trost & Alberts, 1998), the role of casual sex in short-term relationships (Herold, Maticka-Tyndale, & Mewhinney, 1998; Paul, McManus, & Hayes, 2000) and partner selection criteria (Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Regan, 1998; Stewart, Stinnett, & Rosenfeld, 2000). All three of these areas are equally important to the study of short-term relationships and they support the ideas that short-term relationships are a unique type of relationship. Evolutionary theory is an appropriate approach to this topic because it provides a lens that is capable of examining all three of the previously mentioned areas of short-term relationship research. In addition, evolutionary theory can help explain communicative behavioral choices made by college students who initiate short-term relationships. Combining these areas to examine short-term relationships will prove to be beneficial in coming to a greater understanding of short-term romantic relationships within the context of vacations.

Evolutionary Theory

Human evolution has long been associated with Darwin's (1909) research in which he began to examine natural selection through the processes of random variation and selective retention. Random variation is described as the production of slight

variations in offspring due to mating and reproduction of different mates. Selective retention is the continuation of characteristics and variations that are most fit and adaptive to survival. Darwin concluded that genetic characteristics that help an individual live longer, reproduce for a longer period of time, and enjoy more success in mating will enhance the survivability of the individual and thus be passed down from one generation to the next. This random variation of characteristics being passed down will more likely enhance adaptation, survival and mating of future generations. Therefore, as survivability of an individual increases, so will the likelihood of their abilities to mate and reproduce.

Characteristics and behaviors that have evolved solely for reproductive benefits have come about through the process of sexual selection (Darwin, 1909). Within sexual selection, Darwin identified intersexual choice and intrasexual competition as two key processes. Darwin argued that intersexual choice involves the tendency of members of one sex to prefer certain members of the opposite sex as mates, and intrasexual competition involves the tendency of members of one sex to compete with same-sex rivals for opposite-sex partners. For example, if a female picks a particular male who is a medical doctor rather than a mechanic to be her mate, she is enacting intersexual selection, thus picking a member of the opposite sex over another due to her preference in earning potential. Intrasexual competition is a little more indirect. For example, males and females alike may enhance their physical appearance when going to a nightclub in order to look better than other members of their same sex. This is done in hopes of attracting members of the opposite sex, and beating out the competition. According to Trivers (1972) those individuals who invest more in offspring should be more particular

about whom they mate with, placing a larger emphasis on intersexual choice.

Accordingly, those who invest less in offspring should compete for the high investing members of the offspring, thus focusing more on intrasexual competition. Emphasis on either intersexual choice or intrasexual competition then leads to varying mate preferences within sexual selection.

Mate preferences within sexual selection can be examined at three different levels. Buss and Barnes (1986) identified three main levels of analysis for examining characteristic preferences in mating, namely consensual, sex differences, and individual differences. By “levels of analysis,” it is meant that characteristics for potential mates can be sought at three uniquely different points in the human mating system. That is, within the human mating system there are three distinctive ways to examine human mating. Buss and Barnes determined that each of the three levels of mate preferences hold major implications on human mating.

The first level of mate preferences identified by Buss and Barnes is at the consensual level, and is defined as those characteristics commonly desired and sought by both sexes. Because both sexes seek these characteristics, they are often scarce in supply. This means that most individuals must settle for a partner who is less than ideal in terms of having the most desirable characteristics. For instance, if both males and females prefer physically attractive mates, this characteristic runs the risk of becoming scarce thus leading males and females to elevate the importance of other characteristics and seek those other characteristics. However, because most mating systems are not based on single attribute criteria, partners may be sought because they have different combinations of consensually desired attributes, which Buss and Barnes termed cross-character

assortment. For example, if physical attraction, honesty, sense of humor, and career-orientedness are characteristics valued by both males and females, different combinations of these characteristics may be sought.

The second level of mate preferences is defined by sex differences. That is, females value some characteristics more than males, and vice versa. These sex differences also lead to cross-character assortment because of males' and females' different preferences for different but similarly valued characteristics. For instance, if males prefer physical beauty and females prefer earning power, then women who are seen as unattractive and males who are poor will be selectively excluded from mating. Thus, diverse male and female preferences in sexual selection can also contribute to the exclusion of certain individuals in the mating process.

The third level of mate preferences for sexual selection is individual differences. Individual differences are preferred characteristics that vary from one individual to the next. For example, if one particular female prefers earning power while another female prefers honesty, mate selectivity of males will be minimized due to the varying preferences. Therefore, the presence of individual differences in desired characteristics for potential mates intensifies the mating process, minimizes selection of mates, and lessens the effects of consensual preferences.

Trivers' (1972) parental investment model, in association with evolutionary theory, is beneficial in understanding mate selection. Parental investment is defined as "any investment by the parent in an individual offspring that increases the offspring's chances of surviving (and hence reproducing) at the cost of the parent's ability to invest in other offspring" (p. 139). In considering future offspring, females and males are

predicted to choose a mate who will maximize their reproductive fitness and who carries the resources most needed by their sex (Trost & Alberts, 1998; Buss & Schmitt, 1993).

According to the parental investment model (Trivers, 1972), because mammalian females make greater initial investment in the offspring, with use of their bodies for gestation and nursing, females should be more selective when choosing mates.

Moreover, because females provide their physical bodies to carrying offspring, males are led to seek females who are physically attractive, healthy, and apparently fertile (Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Trivers, 1972). Males on the other hand, can invest on the most minimal of levels, copulation, to higher levels of investment with providing resources such as time, money, and shelter (Kenrick, Groth, Sadalla & Trost, 1990). The male's investment leads females to also seek physical attractiveness, physical dominance, and indicators of the ability to produce resources such as shelter, food, and income (Trost & Alberts, 1998). Moreover, males and females alike should look for qualities in potential mates that reveal signs of stability and commitment for a cooperative effort in raising offspring (Trost & Alberts, 1998).

Guided by evolutionary theory, past research has identified certain characteristics that were preferred by individuals when seeking potential long-term mates. Buss and Barnes (1986) found that males and females equally ranked the following 10 characteristics as the most valued in a mate: good companion, considerate, honest, affectionate, dependable, intelligent, kind, understanding, interesting to talk to, and loyal. Buss and Barnes also reported differences between females and males. Females preferred mates who were considerate, honest, dependable, kind, understanding, fond of children, well-liked by others, good earning capacity, ambitious and career oriented, good

family background, and tall. Males preferred mates who were physically attractive, good-looking, a good cook, and frugal. In general, Buss and Barnes argued that characteristics that symbolize marital survival and satisfaction (kind, understanding, exciting and easygoing) and reproductive investment (intelligence, physical attractiveness, and health) are preferred more than others.

Further studies examining preferred characteristics for potential mates have found similar results. In a study by Kenrick and colleagues (1990), participants were asked to rate 24 characteristics of potential partners at different relationship stages. Results from this study were consistent with previously conducted research, especially that guided by the parental investment model. Kenrick et al. reported that females were found to be generally more selective across all stages of relationships in considering mate characteristics and were more selective regarding traits related to resource allocation. In addition, it was noted that physical attractiveness was the only characteristic males rated consistently higher than females.

Findings from both Buss and Schmitt (1986) and Kenrick et al. (1990) expand on the notion of evolutionary theory and its relation to long-term relationships. Characteristics reported to be of high value in both males and females coincide with evolutionary beliefs of females being more selective in choosing potential partners due to the possibilities of high investment in offspring. However as mentioned earlier, short-term relationships do take place, suggesting that not everyone is looking for a long-term relationship or the specific characteristics associated with long-term relationships. This investigation of short-term relationships does not dismiss the importance of long-term relationships as often short-term relationships are initiated to evaluate possibilities for

long-term commitment. The following sections examine past literature on short-term relationships in relation to long-term relationships using an evolutionary framework.

Short-term Relationships

Short-term relationships of various forms occur more often than people may realize. “Lifetime marital monogamy is not characteristic of most people in most societies” (Buss & Schmitt, 1993, p. 204). Approximately 80% of human societies allow the practice of polygyny, permitting men to have more than one wife or mistress (Buss & Schmitt, 1993) and even in societies that declare themselves monogamous, there are occurrences of high divorce rates, incidences of serial marriage, and adultery. This does not even cover the short-term relationships that take place before marriage or the short-term relationships that are taken as an alternative to marriage. Thus, from this data “lifelong mating with a single person does not seem to be the norm” (Buss & Schmitt, 1993, p. 204). If short-term relationships are the norm while society fails to see them as such, a better understanding of the reasoning behind short-term relationships is needed.

The countless names that exist for short-term relationships may be a contributing factor to the misunderstanding of these relationships. Names such as brief affair, one-night stand, temporary liaison, or hookup all carry negative or critical connotations to short-term relationships (Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Paul, McManus & Hayes, 2000). The term ‘hookup’ is the more popular term used with college students and has quickly become associated with the college experience, with 78% of participants reporting that they have engaged in at least one hookup (Paul et al., 2000).

Paul et al. defined hookup as “a sexual encounter which may or may not include sexual intercourse, usually occurring on only one occasion between two people who are

strangers of brief acquaintances” (p. 76). They furthered that hookups are usually spontaneous sexual experiences, with the goal of the hookup typically planned but the individual with whom the hookup occurs is unknown. Thus, hookup is the modern day term for casual sex.

Casual sex has been examined in a variety of contexts in past research literature. One-night stands, occasional sex with a partner with no emotional ties or spontaneous sex with a stranger have all been used to define casual sex, yet the main concept in understanding casual sex is that it takes place in an uncommitted relationship (Paul et al., 2000).

In thinking about attitudes towards casual sex, it is important to look at it with an evolutionary framework. From an evolutionary point of view, attitudes towards casual sex should differ between males and females. Trivers (1972) parental investment model suggests that females carry more risk with sexual intercourse. With the potential of impregnation and future offspring, along with having greater initial investment in offspring, females will be more selective in choosing mates, thus they should have less accepting attitudes towards casual sex. Males however, can have very minimal levels of investment in potential offspring and therefore may have more lenient attitudes in regards to casual sex. Therefore, investigating attitudes towards casual sex can greatly contribute to a better understanding of short-term romantic relationships.

Recent studies have examined attitudes in regards to casual sex. Herold, Maticka-Tyndale, and Mewhinney (1998) conducted a study concerning attitudes and predictors of casual sex in college students and found that men who have previously experienced casual sex had more accepting attitudes of the occurrence happening again. On the other

hand, women who had no previous experience with casual sex held attitudes that were least accepting. In general, women held attitudes that were clustered at the negative or disapproving side for casual sex and men were more scattered with the majority centered on the midpoint. In a study of Canadian college students conducted by Mewhinney and colleagues (1995), they found that 53% of men and 41% of women were accepting of women engaging in casual sex on spring break, whereas in the case for men, 70% of men and 43% of women were accepting of casual sex. These findings are relatively consistent with Paul et al. (2000) who found that more men reported hookups with sexual intercourse and more women reported having hookups without sexual intercourse. With this, Paul et al. concluded that perhaps more men are hooking up with a small number of women who frequently hookup with sexual intercourse. It can then be assumed that differing attitudes towards casual sex between men and women will greatly affect the likelihood of initiating short-term relationships. As a consequence of these findings, hypothesis one was established:

H1: Men will communicate more interest in initiating a short-term relationship while on vacation than will women.

Attitudes towards casual sex are directly related with predicting intentions to engage in casual sex. As with previous experience with casual sex contributing to attitudes towards casual sex, previous experience can also be used as a predictor to engaging in casual sex. Herold et al. (1998) established that once an individual has engaged in casual sex, it not only influences their attitudes toward casual sex, but also the chance that they will engage in casual sex in the future. Nonetheless, previous experience with casual sex is not the only predictor of intentions to engage in casual sex.

Several other factors have been found that assist in predicting intentions to engage in casual sex. Generally, personal standards/norms, and social/situational expectations have been found to have implications on casual sex (Herold et al., 1998; Paul et al., 2000). Personal standards and norms were reported to be the strongest predictor for both men and women, followed by social and situational expectations (Herold et al., 1998). In addition, Regan and Dreyer (1999) found that sex partner related motives, and interpersonal motives, that is the relationship that exists between the two individuals, have an impact on intentions to engage in casual sex.

Underlying factors such as alcohol use and situational influences have been also been examined. Paul et al. (2000) reported that a majority of hookups involved alcohol use by both partners. This is consistent with Desiderato and Crawford (1995) who stated that alcohol may reduce effective evaluation and communication, in turn reducing attempts to stop short of sexual intercourse, if present. Social influences such as peer pressure and situational expectations and norms (i.e. out to have a good time) have also been found to predict intentions to engage in casual sex (Herold et al., 1998; Paul et al., 2000; Regan & Dreyer, 1999). Alcohol use and situational influences may not be direct predictors of casual sex, yet they do lend themselves to the situation, just as does previous experience.

These research findings regarding attitudes, previous experience in relation to casual sex, and other contributing factors are all consistent with the beliefs held in an evolutionary framework. Females have more at risk when engaging in intercourse than do males, from the initial potential of carrying offspring to future investment in the offspring. With this, evolutionary theory holds that females should be more selective

when choosing mates (Trivers, 1972). The findings on attitudes toward casual sex clearly support this notion with females indicating more negative views, while males were more positive or neutral (Herold et al., 1998). Moreover, the attitudes held towards casual sex will affect whether or not an individual engages in casual sex, thus affecting their experience. And, as research has shown, past experience with casual sex will influence future behavior (Herold et al., 1998).

Ties can also be made to evolutionary theory with regards to personal standards and situational expectations. For example, past studies have looked into short-term relationships in relation to casual sex and found that both personal and situational factors inhibit or boost intentions of casual sex. A study by Maticka-Tyndale, Herold, and Mewhinney (1998) found that the strongest influence in males who take part in casual sex was the endorsement from their friends and peers. In addition, they also found that men formed pacts with each other with intentions of engaging in casual sex. Women, however, formed pacts with one another to *not* engage in casual sex. In another study, conducted by Eiser and Ford (1995), men reported engaging in casual sex while on vacation more so than did women, while women formed cross-sex relationships without sexual contact more so than did men. Reasons behind the different outcomes for men and women were similar. Both men and women reported such contributing factors as: motivation to meet new people and not having to listen to others telling them what to do. Men also reported that their intentions to relax and to find love and romance were reasons behind their sexual contact with others. The only other reason women gave to forming new relationships while on vacation was being away from their home environment. Moreover, Regan and Dreyer (1999) found that women more often reported interpersonal

reasons to engaging in casual sex, while men were more likely to report the social environment to be a factor in their actions.

All of this research points to the fact that personal, social/situational, interpersonal, and partner related factors influence behavior and the possibility of initiating short-term relationships. This research also points out that males and females are influenced by different factors. However what is left to be determined is which factors have a greater impact while men and women are on vacation. Thus, research question two developed:

RQ2: Which factors have a greater influence on men and women in the initiation of short-term relationships while on vacation?

Evolutionary Theory and the Initiation of Short-term Relationships

Evolutionary theory has most often been studied in the context of long-term relationships, but it also lends itself to looking at short-term romantic relationships. Areas in which evolutionary theory has been applied to short-term relationships include gender differences (Kenrick, Groth, Trost, & Sadalla, 1993; Trost & Alberts, 1998), strategies in short-term relationships (Buss & Schmitt, 1993), and characteristic preferences in short-term relationship partners versus those in long-term relationships (Kenrick et al., 1993; Sprecher & Regan, 2002; Stewart, Stinnett & Rosenfeld, 2000). These three areas are important in understanding short-term relationships and will be looked at in detail.

An evolutionary framework has often been applied to examine gender differences in both short and long-term romantic relationships. Trost and Alberts (1998) stated that differences in selectivity of potential mates should be greatest in uncommitted

relationships due to the varying contributions to the relationship. Women run the risk of impregnation and possible single motherhood, while men potentially have little risk in investing in a short-term relationship. Consequently, men are typically less selective than are women regarding casual sexual relations, as their investment is potentially low (Kenrick et al., 1993). Regan (1998) found that females will remain to have higher standards than men at all relationship stages due to the possible risks and high investment of future offspring. Clearly, gender differences are evident in short-term relationships with men having lower potential risks and investments than women, which lead to unique strategies in short-term relationships.

Buss and Schmitt (1993) examined the underlying mating decisions and strategies by men and women in short-term relationships through the lens of Sexual Strategies Theory. Sexual Strategies Theory holds 11 premises concerning human mating, but the main premise is that human mating is strategic and the context of the relationship (short-term or long-term) has a great deal with enacted strategies.

Women do not pursue short-term relationships as frequently as do men. According to Buss and Schmitt (1993), because women can encounter costs when pursuing short-term relationships, they tend to be more cautious. Reproductive costs to women were identified as contracting sexually transmitted diseases, reputational damage and being labeled promiscuous, and abuse (physical and sexual). Buss and Schmitt added that the costs of short-term relationships incurred by women tend to be more severe than that of men. Females who are thought to have had multiple partners have a lower social status and are typically disfavored by males due to paternity uncertainty. Males seeking long-term partners do not want to invest their resources into offspring that

are not their own. Additionally, sexual promiscuity among women may be seen as a sign of not being able to obtain a long-term partner willing to commit resources or parental investment to the relationship. However, there are also benefits for women who pursue short-term relationships including: immediate resource extraction, which is obtaining resources (often economic) in exchange for short-term relations and the ability to evaluate short-term mates as possible long-term mates.

Holding with past research, Buss and Schmitt found that men will pursue short-term relationships more than will women. In order to achieve reproductive success, men have traditionally had multiple partners not multiple offspring with one partner (Dawkins, 1986). This is the primary benefit of short-term relationships for males, an increase in the number of offspring. Hence, men will seek women with high fertility, which lead to higher probabilities of reproducing. However, men can encounter four main problems when pursuing short-term relationships (Buss and Schmitt, 1993). These include problems in partner number, identifying which women are sexually accessible, identifying which women are fertile, and avoiding commitment and investment. The costs that men incur in short-term relationships are similar to those of women as well. Reproductive costs to men were identified as contracting a sexually transmitted disease, being labeled a womanizer, and possible violence if pursuing a woman who is already involved with another man. Although men were found to pursue short-term relationships more than women, they must still be cautious of the possible problems or costs that may arise due to their pursuit of reproduction. Aside from the possible problems and costs that may arise from short-term relationships for both men and women, they continue to take place (Buss & Schmitt, 1993).

Comparing short-term relationships to long-term relationships, differences in preferred characteristics are clearly evident. Kenrick et al. (1990) found that extrinsic attributes such as physical appearance are typically more important for uncommitted relationships, whereas intrinsic attributes such as honesty and kindness are more important for long-term relationships. However, Sprecher and Regan (2002) conducted a study investigating the degree to which various characteristics are desired in different relationship types, and found that participants in short-term relationships were no less demanding of intrinsic characteristics than were those who reported on long-term relationships. Yet attributes related to sexuality such as physical appearance, sexual passion, and sexual experience were more desirable in short-term relationship partners than in long-term. The similarities in short and long-term relationships for intrinsic and extrinsic attributes are due to the belief by many that a short-term relationship can turn into a more committed long-term relationship (Regan & Dreyer, 1999).

Furthering preferences in short-term relationships, numerous studies have examined sex differences in preferred characteristics for short and long-term relationships (Stewart, Stinnett, & Rosenfeld, 2000; Kenrick et al., 1990). The study conducted by Stewart et al. (2000), showed that both men and women were more selective with a long-term partner than short-term partner, but that they did differ in selecting a short-term partner. In order of importance, females reported: trustworthy/honest, sense of humor, kindness/understanding, exciting personality and dependable as the most important characteristics for short-term relationships. Men reported, in order of importance: trustworthy/honest, exciting personality, sense of humor, kindness/understanding, and physical attractiveness to be important characteristics in short-term relationships. Least

important characteristics for both men and women were: good housekeeper, desire for children, and good genes. It is important note, however, that the relationships examined by Stewart et al. were dating relationships, in that future contact between individuals was expected, thus increasing chances of a long-term relationship. Kenrick et al. (1990) concluded that females were overall more selective of their partners at all levels of commitment. More specifically, females were more selective with status-linked characteristics such as powerful, high social status, popular, wealthy, good hereditary, good earning capacity, dominance, good housekeeper, and college graduate. Males on the other hand, were more selective about physical attractiveness at all levels of involvement.

All of the above findings indicate that differences do indeed exist between men and women in terms of characteristic preferences for short-term relationships. Holding with past research on preferred characteristics and taking an evolutionary point of view, hypothesis two was created:

H2: Men will report placing a higher value on physical attractiveness for a potential short-term relationship partner, while women will report higher values on status-linked characteristics.

Initiation of Short-term Romantic Relationships

Entering a new romantic relationship can bring both feelings of excitement and apprehension. Being able to gauge whether or not someone else has reciprocal interest or feelings can be quite difficult. Moreover, knowing how to act towards the other person and communicate interest can also be a complicated situation. Schmitt and Buss (1996) argue that factors such as the relationship type being initiated and the context in which

the people are situated can both weigh heavily on the initiation strategies used. Thus, exploring the initiation strategies and tactics used in short-term romantic relationships will be beneficial in understanding short-term romantic relationships and their development.

Past research on initiation of relationships has looked at areas such as self-presentation (Goffman, 1959; Low, 1979; Tooke & Camire, 1991), sexual contact influence strategies (Christopher & Frandsen, 1990), in addition to numerous more. However, most of the research done on initiation strategies seems to be geared towards long-term relationships with the focus on future possibilities. Schmitt and Buss (1996) conducted a study on the perceived effectiveness of mate attraction tactics within short and long-term relationships, yet there remains a void of what tactics are actually used in initiating short-term romantic relationships. The area of self-presentation will be the focus of this investigation and will provide a basic of understanding of the initiation of short-term romantic relationships on vacation.

Self-presentation or impression management is highlighting certain aspects of oneself in order to appear more attractive or pleasing to the intended recipient. Goffman (1959) suggests that in order to achieve self-presentation successfully, a person must be perceived as sincere and honest. Vangelisti, Knapp, and Daly (1990) found that arrogant self-presentation may produce negative outcomes and cause those individuals to be seen as less socially attractive. Thus, the ideal form of self-presentation is to seem positive and desirable, yet also realistic.

Past studies have examined various forms of self-presentation. A study conducted by Tooke and Camire (1991) examined patterns of deception used in mating strategies.

Their findings showed that males were often deceptive in their level of commitment, their sincerity, and their abilities of resource acquisition. In addition to being deceptive, Low (1979) suggests that ornamentation is a key element for males in acquiring potential female mates. Low argues that ornamentation provides cues to social position, potential and actual resource acquisition, physical strength, and sexual prowess. Thus with ornamentation, males seek to increase their desirability. For females, both Tooke and Camire (1991) and Low (1979) found females to alter/enhance their physical appearance in order to entice potential male mates. Low suggests that enhancing one's physical appearance provides cues to signal reproductive success. Tooke and Camire (1991) concluded that both males and females appear to engage in tactics or strategies that complement the mate selection criteria of the opposite sex. That is, males and females try to enhance the characteristics or abilities that are sought by potential opposite-sex mates.

These findings coincide with an evolutionary viewpoint. According to evolutionary theory, males will seek female mates who are physically fit to ensure a greater likelihood of reproductive success (Buss & Schmitt, 1993, Trivers, 1972). Hence, females try to enhance their physical appearance to attract prospective mates. Females on the other hand, will seek mates who have the ability to provide good genes for future offspring, as well as the ability to produce resources such as shelter, food, and income (Trost & Alberts, 1998). For this reason, men will also alter their physical appearance, as well as flaunt their resource acquisition capabilities. These mating tactics appear to be geared more towards long-term relationships with the primary focus being on future possibilities. However, it is important to also investigate what types of initiation

strategies are used in initiating short-term relationships. With this, research question three was developed:

RQ3: Which types of self-presentation strategies are used when initiating a short-term relationship on vacation?

CHAPTER 2: METHODS

Participants

A total of 357 participants were recruited from undergraduate communication courses at three universities in the Western United States. Students were offered extra credit for their participation. The participants were, on average, 21.31 years old ($SD = 3.70$). One hundred sixty-five (46.2%) were male, 190 (53.2%) were female, and 2 (0.6%) did not report their sex. Of the participants, 92 (25.8%) were first year college students, 75 (21.0%) were sophomores, 88 (24.6%) were juniors, 98 (27.5%) were seniors, and 4 (1.1%) were graduate students. Majors of participants varied greatly with most participants, 60 (16.81%) being Communication Studies majors, 58 (16.25%) in Business, and 39 (10.92%) having more than one major. Of the 357 participants who responded, 62 (17.1%) reported initiating a relationship while on vacation, and of those responses, 36 (10.1%) were short-term relationships, and 26 (7.3%) were long-term relationships.

Instruments

In creating this study, the use of previously constructed instruments was determined to be useful and comprised a majority of the survey (see Appendix A for complete instrument). The first section of the survey included general demographic information such as sex, age, current relationship status, major in school, year in school and place of vacation. Latter sections of the survey consisted of previously constructed instruments that examine attitudes towards short-term relationships and casual sex, factors that would influence people to engage in a short-term relationship, characteristics

sought in potential partners for a short-term relationship, and finally strategies and tactics used in initiating a short-term relationship.

Personal Normative Beliefs (Herold et al., 1998). This instrument was used to get participants to start thinking about their thoughts towards casual sex and short-term relationships. Three questions were asked and measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale where 1 equals (*strongly disagree*) and 5 equals (*strongly agree*). Chronbach's alpha was .79.

Taxonomy of Motives for Engaging in Short-Term Sexual Encounters (Regan & Dreyer, 1999). This instrument was used to assess which factors have a greater influence on the formation of short-term relationships while on vacation. Five main categories of motives were measured. Personal motives are described as motives within the person seeking to engage in casual sex. For example, "I would engage in a short-term relationship for pleasure" was a personal motive. Questions 13, 14, 16, 17, 22, 25, 26, 31, 35, 36, 39, and 42 were under this category and had a reliability of .90. Other motives are associated with the qualities of the sex partner. An example of an other motive is "I would engage in a short-term relationship because the other person is attractive." Questions 15, 18, 21, 27, 32, and 38 comprised the other category and had a reliability of .71. Interpersonal motives are associated with the relationship between the casual sex partners. "I would engage in a short-term relationship if there was mutual attraction," is an example of an interpersonal motive. This category was comprised of questions 19, 23, 30, and 33, with a reliability of .70. Social environmental motives reside within the social environment. An example of social environment motives is "I would engage in a short-term relationship to fit in with the behavior of my peer group."

This category had a reliability of .65 and was comprised of questions 20, 24, 28, and 41.

Lastly, physical environmental motives are located in the physical environment.

Questions 29, 34, 37, and 40 were included under this category. For example, one physical environment question is “I would engage in a short-term relationship because there was contraception available.” This category had a reliability of .84. The instrument was modified to fit the definition of a short-term relationship, excluding questions that pertained to previous knowledge of the partner.

Preferred Characteristics for Potential Mates (Kenrick et al., 1990). Twenty-four characteristics adopted from Kenrick et al. (1990) were used in assessing character preferences for potential short-term partners. Thirteen of the 24 characteristics were taken from Buss and Barnes (1986) with the other 11 descriptors added by Kenrick et al. (1990). Participants were asked to rate the set of characteristics on their importance in a short-term partner. Characteristics included: kind and understanding, religious, exciting personality, creative and artistic, good housekeeper, intelligent, good earning capacity, wants children, easygoing, good hereditary, college graduate, physically attractive, healthy, aggressive, emotionally stable, friendly, popular, powerful, sexy, wealthy, ambitious, good sense of humor, high social status, and dominant. A 5-point Likert-type scale was used to rate the characteristics in importance with 1 (*not very important*) and 5 (*very important*).

Taxonomy of Deceptive Mating Acts and Tactics (Tooke & Camire, 1991). A modified version of this instrument was used to examine which strategies males and females used while initiating a short-term relationship. The element of deception was taken out of the wording, as deception was not being looked at, but simply the tactic. For

example, item 67, originally worded as “Spending money on the opposite sex when one really can not afford it,” was changed to “I spent money on him/her.” Wording of the original statements was also modified to be gender neutral. A total of 30 statements under categories of dominance/resources, enhanced body appearance, enhanced clothing appearance, sincerity/trust/kindness, sexual intentions, interpersonal involvement, deception involving third parties, and positive self-presentation were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale with 1 (*never*) and 5 (*very frequently*). The category of dominance/resources included questions 67, 78, 79, and 86 and had a reliability of .63. Enhanced body appearance had a reliability of .60 and included questions 68, 75, 80, and 89. Enhanced clothing appearance had a reliability of .83 and included questions 70, 71, 74, and 82. The category of sincerity/trust/kindness was comprised of questions 72, 76, 83, and 87 and had a reliability of .84. Sexual intentions consisted of questions 69, 84, 85, and 88 and had a reliability of .62. The category of interpersonal involvement had a reliability of .60 and included questions 90, 91, 95, and 97. Deception involving third parties consisted of questions 92, 93, 94, and 96, with a reliability of .76. The positive self-presentation category included questions 73, 77, and 81 and had a reliability of .70.

Procedure

A questionnaire was administered after the 2005 spring break vacation, which was approximately the last couple weeks of March. The questionnaire was designed to measure attitudes toward engaging in casual sexual behavior, behavior of the participants, and strategies and tactics used to initiate short-term romantic relationships while on vacation. The questionnaire asked participants about their thoughts on casual sex, whether or not they initiated a short-term romantic relationship on vacation, what factors

would influence their behavior in initiating a short-term romantic relationship on vacation, what characteristics they would seek in a short-term relationship partner, and what strategies or tactics they used in initiating the relationship. The last section, that of initiation strategies, was only answered by participants who had initiated a relationship while on vacation.

Upon meeting the recruited participants, the questionnaire administrator explained the study's purpose, reminded the participants that their participation was voluntary, and informed them that their names would not be associated with their responses. Consent forms and questionnaires were then distributed to the participants. Respondents were given 10-20 minutes to complete the questionnaire and then were instructed to place their completed questionnaire and signed consent form face down in two separate piles. The respondents were told not to identify themselves on the questionnaire, but were asked to print their name on a separate page for extra credit allocation. Participants were thanked for their participation, and were given the opportunity to take a handout with a short debriefing statement. The debriefing, like the cover letter, described how the results of the study will be used, and further clarified the purpose of the study. The debriefing also contained researcher contact information in case of any questions or concerns from participants. Contact information of local services was also provided in case of any felt discomfort.

CHAPTER 3: RESULTS

Research question one asked what percentage of college students participate in short-term romantic relationships while on vacation. Results from running a basic frequency test indicated that 10.1% ($n=36$) of participants reported initiating a short-term romantic relationship while on their most recent vacation. In addition to short-term romantic relationships on vacation, 7.3% ($n=26$) of participants reported initiating a long-term relationship, making a total of 17.1% ($n=62$) of participants initiating some type of relationship while on vacation.

To test the first hypothesis, which predicted that men would report initiating short-term romantic relationships more so than would women, a chi-square test of independence was conducted. The hypothesis was supported. The results indicated a significant difference between the sexes in relationship initiation ($\chi^2 [2, N=36] = 17.17, p < .001$). An examination of the cell percentages indicated that 7.9% ($n=28$) males reported initiating short-term romantic relationships while on vacation, and 2.3% ($n=8$) of females reported initiating a short-term relationship while on vacation.

The second research question examined which factors would have a greater influence on the initiation of short-term relationships while subjects were away on vacation. Regan and Dreyer's (1999) taxonomy of motives for engaging in short-term sexual encounters was used to answer this question. Single-sample t -tests were conducted to answer this question and compare the means of each individual factor. The results indicated a difference between factors and the influence they carried on influencing the initiation of short-term relationships on vacation. Specifically, results indicated that in the overall population, interpersonal factors ($M = 2.89, SD = .83$) would

have the greatest influence on the initiation of short-term relationships on vacation than would any other factor ($t [356] = .50, p < .001$). However, when looking at those who actually participated in a short-term relationship, results indicated that interpersonal ($t [35] = .28, p < .05$), physical ($t [35] = .57, p < .01$), and personal factors ($t [35] = .42, p < .001$) were reported to be the most influential. (Means and standard deviations can be found in Table 1.)

Taking a closer look at influential factors on short-term relationships on vacation, independent samples t -tests also indicated significant sex differences. In the overall population, results showed that males reported personal ($t [353] = .59, p < .001$), other ($t [353] = .60, p < .001$), interpersonal ($t [353] = .39, p < .001$), social environment ($t [353] = .27, p < .001$), and physical environment factors ($t [353] = .63, p < .001$) to all be significantly more influential on their behavior than did females. (Means and standard deviations can be found in Table 1.) However, when examining those who actually participated in a short-term relationship, results indicated that males reported more significance only on personal ($t [34] = .61, p < .05$), other ($t [34] = .56, p < .05$), and physical environment factors ($t [34] = .77, p < .05$). (Means and standard deviations can be found in Table 2.) Interpersonal ($t [34] = .18, p < .53$) and social factors ($t [34] = .31, p < .25$) were reported at similar significance levels for both males (for *interpersonal*, $M = 3.30, SD = .71$; for *social*, $M = 1.62, SD = .69$) and females (for *interpersonal*, $M = 3.13, SD = .64$; for *social*, $M = 1.31, SD = .58$).

Table 1
Means and Standard Deviations for Factors Influencing Short-Term Relationship
Initiation (Overall Population)

Factors	Males & Females	Males	Females
Personal	2.39 ^c (.87)	2.70*** (.87)	2.12 (.76)
Other (Sex Partner)	2.13 ^b (.71)	2.45*** (.71)	1.85 (.57)
Interpersonal	2.89 ^d (.83)	3.10*** (.76)	2.71 (.84)
Social Environment	1.50 ^a (.60)	1.64*** (.64)	1.37 (.52)
Physical Environment	2.33 ^c (1.05)	2.67*** (1.09)	2.03 (.93)

Note: Means with different superscripts are statistically different.

*** $p < .001$

Table 2
Means and Standard Deviations for Factors Influencing Short-Term Relationship
Initiation
(Short-Term Relationship Population)

Factors	Males & Females	Males	Females
Personal	2.98 ^c (.64)	3.12* (.58)	2.51 (.64)
Other (Sex Partner)	2.56 ^b (.64)	2.69* (.62)	2.13 (.57)
Interpersonal	3.26 ^c (.69)	3.30 (.71)	3.13 (.64)
Social Environment	1.55 ^a (.65)	1.62 (.69)	1.31 (.58)
Physical Environment	3.13 ^c (.93)	3.30* (.89)	2.53 (.88)

Note: Means with different superscripts are statistically different.

* $p < .05$.

To test the second hypothesis, which predicted that men would report placing a higher value on physical attractiveness for a potential short-term relationship partner and that women would report higher values on status-linked characteristics, an independent samples *t*-test was conducted. Kenrick and colleagues (1990) list of preferred

characteristics for potential mates was used for this hypothesis. Results revealed partial support for the hypothesis. Table 3 provides a look at all preferred characteristics means and standard deviations.

Results indicated that men ($M = 4.33$, $SD = .90$) and women ($M = 4.31$, $SD = 3.74$) reported placing a high value on physical attractiveness; yet women also reported placing a high value on physical attractiveness ($t [350] = .02$, $p < .96$) for potential short-term partners. Results also indicated that women (for *good earning capacity*, $M = 2.79$, $SD = 1.11$; for *college graduate*, $M = 3.01$, $SD = 1.28$) reported placing a higher value on certain status-linked characteristics, namely good earning capacity ($t [349] = -.36$, $p < .01$), and being a college graduate ($t [350] = -.46$, $p < .001$).

Further analysis revealed other sex differences regarding preferred characteristics for a short-term partner. Women (for *kind and understanding*, $M = 4.32$, $SD = .86$; for *exciting personality*, $M = 4.29$, $SD = .80$; for *intelligent*, $M = 4.18$, $SD = .81$; for *ambitious*, $M = 3.68$, $SD = 1.08$; for *good sense of humor* $M = 4.53$, $SD = .70$) reported placing higher values on kind and understanding ($t [350] = -.66$, $p < .001$), exciting personality ($t [349] = -.28$, $p < .01$), intelligent ($t [349] = -.43$, $p < .001$), friendly ($t [350] = -.32$, $p < .001$), ambitious ($t [348] = -.33$, $p < .01$), and good sense of humor ($t [347] = -.38$, $p < .001$). Men (for *aggressive*, $M = 2.95$, $SD = 1.10$; for *sexy* $M = 4.19$, $SD = .96$) reported placing higher values on aggressive ($t [350] = .87$, $p < .001$), and sexy ($t [349] = .46$, $p < .001$).

Additional results were found when the data of those who actually took part in a short-term relationship while on vacation was examined. Women (for *kind and understanding*, $M = 4.50$, $SD = .93$; for *good sense of humor*, $M = 5.00$, $SD = .00$) who

took part in a short-term relationship over vacation reported placing higher values on kind and understanding ($t [34] = -.86, p < .05$), and good sense of humor ($t [34] = -.68, p < .05$). Men ($M = 4.64, SD = .56$) reported placing a higher value on sexy ($t [34] = .89, p < .01$).

Table 3
Means and Standard Deviations for Characteristics Reported for Potential Short-Term
Relationship Partners

Characteristic	Overall		Short-Term Relationships	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Kind & Understanding	3.66 (1.04)	4.32*** (.86)	3.64 (1.10)	4.50* (.93)
Religious	2.15 (1.32)	2.35 (1.46)	1.89 (1.13)	2.50 (1.20)
Exciting Personality	4.02 (.80)	4.29** (.80)	4.32 (.77)	4.63 (.74)
Creative & Artistic	3.13 (1.10)	3.22 (1.11)	3.32 (1.06)	3.63 (1.51)
Good Housekeeper	2.35 (1.22)	2.37 (1.11)	2.36 (1.28)	3.00 (.93)
Intelligent	3.75 (1.05)	4.18*** (.81)	3.75 (.97)	4.25 (.89)
Good Earning Capacity	2.42 (1.15)	2.79** (1.11)	2.79 (1.13)	2.88 (1.36)
Wants Children	2.04 (1.24)	2.31 (1.40)	1.86 (1.11)	2.00 (1.20)
Easygoing	4.06 (.76)	4.20 (.85)	4.04 (.79)	4.63 (.52)
Good Hereditary	2.59 (1.22)	2.42 (1.17)	2.86 (1.21)	2.63 (1.30)
College Graduate	2.55 (1.34)	3.01** (1.28)	2.75 (1.32)	2.88 (1.25)
Physically Attractive	4.33 (.90)	4.31 (3.74)	4.71 (.46)	4.50 (.76)
Healthy	4.25 (.82)	4.46 (3.80)	4.50 (.58)	4.13 (.64)
Aggressive	2.95*** (1.10)	2.09 (1.06)	3.18 (1.16)	2.25 (1.28)
Emotionally Stable	4.09 (1.00)	4.14 (.82)	4.29 (.71)	4.38 (.74)
Friendly	4.26 (.76)	4.58*** (.66)	4.39 (.63)	4.75 (.46)
Popular	2.54 (1.11)	2.47 (1.05)	2.68 (.91)	2.29 (1.11)
Powerful	2.52 (1.08)	2.46 (1.09)	2.82 (.98)	2.75 (.89)
Sexy	4.19*** (.96)	3.73 (1.05)	4.64** (.56)	3.75 (.89)

Wealthy	2.34 (1.14)	2.47 (1.05)	2.54 (1.23)	2.25 (1.28)
Ambitious	3.35 (1.14)	3.68** (1.08)	3.68 (1.06)	3.75 (1.17)
Good Sense of humor	4.15 (.85)	4.53*** (.70)	4.32 (.77)	5.00* (0.00)
High Social Status	2.33 (1.15)	2.31 (1.07)	2.46 (1.26)	2.38 (1.19)
Dominant	2.26 (1.07)	2.13 (1.02)	2.39 (1.13)	2.13 (1.25)

Note. *** $p < .001$. ** $p < .01$. * $p < .05$.

The final research question examined initiation strategies used by both males and females in initiating a short-term relationship while on vacation. Tooke and Camire's (1991) taxonomy of deceptive mating acts and tactics was used to answer this question. The results of single-sample t -tests indicated a difference between self-presentation strategies and frequency of usage in initiating a short-term relationship on vacation. Independent samples t -tests indicated that women reported the strategy of promoting a positive self ($t [33] = -.81, p < .01$) as the most frequent strategy used in initiating a short-term relationship on vacation. Women also reported enhancing their appearance with clothing ($t [33] = -1.22, p < .01$), enhancing their appearance with their body ($t [33] = -1.39, p < .001$), and interpersonal involvement ($t [33] = -.61, p < .05$) as the most frequently used strategies. Between both men and women, trust/sincerity/kindness ($t [34] = .42, p < .01$) was reported to be the most frequently used strategy. Table 4 provides a full look at the mean ratings of the initiation strategies used while initiating a short-term relationship on vacation.

Table 4
Means and Standard Deviations of Initiation Strategies Used in Short-Term Relationships
on Vacation

Initiation Strategies	Males & Females	Males	Females
Resources	2.41 ^{ab} (.83)	2.43 (.83)	2.38 (.91)
Enhanced Appearance (Body)	2.53 ^b (.97)	2.21 (.78)	3.60*** (.74)
Enhanced Appearance (Clothing)	2.09 ^a (.94)	1.82 (.77)	3.03** (.88)
Interpersonal Involvement	2.69 ^c (.66)	2.55 (.59)	3.16* (.68)
Trust/Sincerity/Kindness	3.76 ^f (.84)	3.66 (.86)	4.07 (.73)
Sex Intentions	2.91 ^d (.72)	2.90 (.78)	2.95 (.55)
Deception Involving Third Parties	2.06 ^a (.80)	2.02 (.83)	2.22 (.83)
Positive Self Promotion	3.33 ^c (.84)	3.15 (.85)	3.96** (.38)

Note: Means with different superscripts are statistically different.

*** $p < .001$. ** $p < .01$. * $p < .05$.

CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION

Short-Term Romantic Relationships and Their Occurrence on Vacation

Although short-term romantic relationships are not widely accepted in North American society, the results of the current study indicate that they do take place, within the college population and while on vacation. Research Question One asked what percentage of college students initiate short-term romantic relationships while on vacation. Findings from this study revealed that approximately 10% of college students were in a short-term relationship over their most recent vacation. Research has previously noted that positive attitudes towards casual sex tend to increase in vacation settings due to being free from everyday responsibilities (Eiser & Ford, 1995; Mewhinney et al., 1995). The belief of not being judged for one's behavior, a sense of anonymity, and an overall belief of other's accepting attitudes towards casual sex have also been found to increase the occurrence of casual sex and short-term relationships (Mewhinney et al., 1995). Furthermore, Josiam and colleagues (1998) noted that vacation travel for college students is often a time to meet new sexual partners, rather than a time to go on vacation with a current romantic partner. The current findings clearly support the notion that short-term relationships may occur when students go on vacation. While the reported percentage of students participating in a short-term relationship over vacation is low, it still indicates that students participate in short-term romantic relationships while on vacation, thus extending past research on the occurrence of short-term relationships.

However, the findings of the current study revealed that short-term relationships were not the only type of relationship initiated while on vacation. Approximately 7% of

college students reported initiating a long-term relationship while on vacation, thus vacations can be used as a springboard for various types of relationships.

Pursuing Short-Term Romantic Relationships

Traditionally, men have been placed in the position of being the initiators of romantic relationships. However, it is not uncommon for women to also take on the role of initiating relationships. While, it was predicted that men would communicate more interest in initiating a short-term relationship while on vacation than would women, findings revealed that men reported more interest in initiating short-term romantic relationships on vacation than did women. Thus affirming the traditional typecast of males being the primary initiators of romantic relationships.

This finding falls right in line with the beliefs held in evolutionary theory (Darwin, 1909). According to the evolutionary perspective, and the parental investment model specifically (Trivers, 1972), females should have less accepting attitudes towards casual sex and short-term relationships as they have more at risk when engaging in such behaviors. However, males carry fewer risks and thus would have more lenient views towards casual sex and short-term relationships. Mewhinney and colleagues (1995) furthered this belief when they found that in general, males and females were equally accepting of females engaging in casual sex, but in the case of males engaging in casual sex, men were much more accepting than were females. The finding from the current study extends the belief that women tend to have more cautious attitudes towards casual sex than do men. With the risk of possible impregnation, investing in future offspring alone, and a disfavored reputation, women have much more at stake when engaging in casual sex. Men, however, can have very minimal levels of investment and risks. In

addition, from an evolutionary perspective males have tried to achieve greater reproductive success by having multiple partners, not by having multiple offspring with a single partner (Dawkins, 1986). Therefore, the finding that men communicate more interest in pursuing short-term romantic relationships on vacation is consistent with the evolutionary perspective, and furthers the theory into a new context, one that may seem to not fit with traditional mating patterns. But specifically, these results indicate that men more than women communicate more interest in initiating short-term romantic relationships.

Motivating Factors and Short-Term Romantic Relationships

Reproductive success is not the only reason that people may choose to initiate a short-term relationship while on vacation. As was also revealed in this study's findings, some women reported initiating a short-term romantic relationship while on vacation, thus suggesting that other factors contribute to the initiation of these relationships. Research question two examined which factors would have a greater influence on the initiation of a short-term relationship on vacation and several interesting things came about.

Previous research has found that personal, other (sex partner), interpersonal, social environment, and physical environment factors contribute to the occurrence of casual sex by either increasing or thwarting the act (Herold et al., 1998; Paul et al., 2000; Regan & Dreyer, 1999). When examining the overall population for this study, interpersonal factors (motives associated with the relationship between the two individuals) were shown to have the greatest influence on the initiation of short-term relationships. Reasons such as increasing the probability of a long-term relationship, and

a mutual trust and attraction were included under this category. It is interesting to note that in the overall population men rated interpersonal factors higher than did women, but in the population that was involved in a short-term relationship on vacation, interpersonal factors were rated similarly by men and women.

From an evolutionary perspective, the reason as to why women would rate interpersonal factors to be a greater influence for them engaging in casual sex can be explained. Building a relationship and connecting with a potential sexual partner is important for women in deciding to have or abstain from sexual intercourse (Sprecher & Regan, 1996). Moreover, by creating a connection with a potential sexual partner, women can determine whether there is any long-term potential with the partner. Women also stand to gain immediate resources, often times economic, by building trust and a connection with their partner. Thus, the importance of interpersonal motives for women is in line with an evolutionary model of human mating.

For men, it was quite surprising to find how highly interpersonal factors were rated to be influential. Past research has found that men typically report social environment factors to be most influential on their behavior (Maticka-Tyndale et al., 1998; Regan & Dreyer, 1999). This shift in results is quite interesting and may indicate that men may also use short-term relationships to search for a partner whom they can trust and possibly create a more permanent and lasting relationship. Contrary to other studies that have reported interpersonal factors to be primarily related to women, this study reveals that interpersonal factors are also important to men in initiating short-term relationships.

One possible explanation for this finding could be that men are not just looking for a one-night affair or something casual, but are looking for a relationship that may be more long-term. Likewise, male participants in Eiser and Ford's (1995) study reported intentions of finding love and romance for engaging in sexual contact with others. Thus, building a friendship that incorporates mutual trust and attraction with a potential partner could help men advance a current short-term relationship into a long-term relationship. Another explanation may lie in the risks associated with engaging in casual sex. One major risk in engaging in casual sex is the possibility of obtaining a sexually transmitted disease. College campuses and health centers are regularly promoting safe sex among college students and informing students of the possible consequences of unsafe sex. With this knowledge, men may be more apt to building a mutual trust and friendship with a potential partner to avoid any possible risks. With these reasons, it can be explained that men would rate interpersonal factors as important in influencing their behavior in initiating a short-term relationship during vacation.

In addition to interpersonal factors, men also reported personal, other, social environment, and physical environment factors to be more important in influencing their behavior than did women in the overall population. Consistent with the overall population, men who participated in a short-term relationship on vacation also rated personal, other, and physical environment factors to be important. Yet, men and women both rated interpersonal and social environment factors similarly in the short-term relationship population.

Based on an evolutionary framework certain conclusions can be made from these results. The finding that men reported other (sex partner) factors to be an influencing

factor in their behavior is consistent with past research. According to an evolutionary perspective men tend to emphasize physical attractiveness in potential sexual partners. Physical attractiveness serves as an indicator to overall health and fertility, which is a key element to a male's reproductive success (Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Kenrick et al., 1990). Therefore, it is expected and consistent with evolutionary beliefs that males would rate other (sex partner) factors to be highly influential factors in initiating a short-term relationship on vacation.

The finding that both men and women rated social environment factors similarly is quite interesting compared to past findings. Although the mean score was relatively low for both men and women, the similar ratings are worth noting. Previous research findings have found that males tend to report social factors in influencing them to initiate a short-term relationship (Regan & Dreyer, 1999; Maticka-Tyndale et al., 1998). Such things as making pacts with friends to engage in a short-term relationship, trying to fit in with their peer group, or trying to enhance their social status have all been reported under social environment factors (Maticka-Tyndale et al., 1998; Regan & Dreyer, 1999). Thus for men, a high rating of social environment factors would have been expected, yet this was not the case for this study. A possible reason for this may be because of the overall low occurrence rate of short-term relationships during vacation. If it were perceived that more men were initiating short-term relationships during vacation, then the social environment factor may have been more of an influential factor. However, as there was a low occurrence of short-term relationships, there was less of a need to fit in with the peer group in terms of engaging in casual sex.

For women, however, past research has indicated that social factors such as making pacts with friends to *not* engage in a short-term relationship was influential in their behavior (Maticka-Tyndale et al., 1998). Therefore, these results are congruent with past research indicating that social environment factors are not highly influential in motivating women to engage in casual sex, but in influencing them to abstain from it. Results from the current study suggest that for both men and women, social environment factors played a minimal role in influencing them to engage in a short-term relationship on vacation. Overall, men and women report engaging in short-term relationships during vacation for a variety of reasons, but in short-term contexts, men are particularly motivated by personal, sex partner, and physical environment factors.

It is worth mentioning that in the overall population men reported being more motivated than women in every regard, yet in the population of those who initiated a short-term relationship during vacation there were fewer differences between men and women. A possible reason for this may be because participants who did not initiate a relationship over vacation were asked to answer as in a hypothetical situation. Men may have responded thinking that multiple factors would have a greater influence on them to initiate a short-term relationship during vacation. Maticka-Tyndale, Herold, and Mewhinney (1998) found that more men went on vacation intending to engage in casual sex than women, also supporting the notion of a more accepting attitude towards casual sex. With men reporting to be motivated by more factors in both the overall population and the population of those who initiated a short-term relationship during vacation, it suggests that men go into the vacation setting with a more accepting attitude of casual sex. Thus, concurrent with past studies and an evolutionary model of human mating, the

findings from this study suggest that men have more accepting attitudes towards casual sex than women.

Preferred Characteristics of Short-Term Relationship Partners

Choosing a potential sexual partner is not an easy task. Buss and Barnes (1986) stated that a crucial research task is to identify the characteristics sought by prospective mates, as males and females do not prefer all members of the opposite sex equally. Hypothesis two took on this task and predicted that men would report placing a higher value on physical attractiveness, while women would report placing higher values on status-linked characteristics. Findings revealed partial support for this hypothesis.

Results indicated that both men and women reported placing a high value on physical attractiveness for potential short-term partners. In regards to status-linked characteristics, women reported placing higher values on good earning capacity and college graduate, but both women and men rated the other status-linked characteristics similarly. In addition, women also reported placing higher values on kind and understanding, exciting personality, intelligent, friendly, ambitious, and good sense of humor. Men reported higher values for aggressive and sexy.

Previous researchers have reported that females tend to be more selective across all stages of relationships in considering mate characteristics (Regan, 1998; Kenrick et al., 1990; Buss & Schmitt, 1993). The results of the current study are consistent with past findings as women overall and women who reported initiating a short-term relationship reported rating a larger number of characteristics as more important than did men, thus indicating that women are more selective than are men when choosing a potential sexual partner. With greater risks and investment in potential offspring, it is clearly evident as

to why women would be more selective and take more into consideration when choosing a sexual partner than would men.

Additional characteristics identified by women also parallel previous research. Buss and Schmitt (1993) stated that women will often use a short-term relationship to evaluate a partner for long-term potential. Good earning capacity and college graduate are indicators of resource acquisition capabilities, and from an evolutionary perspective should be very important to women in providing for them and potential offspring. Moreover, characteristics such as intelligent, ambitious, exciting personality, kind and understanding, and good sense of humor can all be used to evaluate a partner for long-term potential and compatibility. Furthermore, although women were not predicted to rate physical attractiveness as highly as would men, it can also be explained. Schmitt and Buss (1996) suggested that women should also prefer physical attractiveness in their sexual partners to increase the opportunity of such valuable characteristics being passed down to potential offspring. Therefore, physical attractiveness is important for men and women and both for reproductive reasons.

Sexy and aggressive were also rated as being important by men for a potential short-term partner. Sexy can be related to physical attractiveness, with men looking for attractive females for mating purposes. As for the aggressive characteristic, this may suggest that men are looking for women to take more of an active role in initiating a relationship. Beginning a relationship can be a very complicated situation and when there is involvement from both parties there may be less of a chance of failure or rejection. Moreover, with men preferring aggressiveness in women, it allows them to identify which women are sexually accessible. This may also lead to minimizing the risk

of possible violence if pursuing a woman who is already involved with another man. Thus, with men wanting women to be more aggressive in initiating relationships, it solves the problem of men gaining sexual access easily and quickly as well as, taking some pressure off of men and their role in being the sole initiator of relationships.

In the population of those who actually initiated a short-term relationship on vacation, results were slightly different, but retained some similarities. Men rated sexy as the most important characteristic for a potential partner, thus continuing to place importance on physically attractive related characteristics. Schmitt and Buss (1996) argue that men desire easy sexual access with short-term partners and when women suggest easy access, they are perceived as effective in regards to short-term mating. Thus, with an emphasis on sexy, men are indicating that they want a direct signal of sexual availability, and in turn a short-term relationship. Women placed higher values on kind and understanding, and a good sense of humor, once again maintaining an importance on characteristics that lend themselves to the evaluation of a partner for long-term potential. Furthermore, this finding is concurrent with Eiser and Ford (1995) who found that women formed cross-sex relationships without sexual contact more than men. Placing an importance on kind and understanding, and a good sense of humor may suggest that the women in this study intended to create a cross-sex friendship, which later developed into a sexual relationship. Overall, for short-term partners, both men and women were less selective regarding preferred characteristics. Nevertheless, women remained more selective than men.

Initiation Strategies Used in Short-Term Romantic Relationships

Communicating interest in someone can be a very complicated and strategic situation. Schmitt and Buss (1996) argue that certain acts of self-promotion used as initiation strategies can be effective in one context, but in other contexts can be unproductive in the pursuit of a relationship. The final research question of this study investigated what self-presentation strategies are used when initiating a short-term relationship on vacation. Results revealed that women reported greater frequency of enhancing their appearance, both with their physical body and clothing, promoting a positive self, and interpersonal involvement to initiate a short-term relationship on vacation. For both men and women, the strategy of trust/sincerity/kindness was reported to be the most frequently used in initiating a short-term relationship on vacation. Overall, women reported using more self-presentation tactics than men.

Possible explanations for this research finding can be explained through an evolutionary perspective. Past research has concluded that because women have more to lose from a mismatched relationship, they should be more discerning about how and with whom to initiate a relationship (Trost & Alberts, 1998). Previous studies have also supported the notion that women are more skillful at encoding and decoding nonverbal behaviors (Buck, 1984), which are fundamental in the initiation process. In addition, women have been found to have a larger range of flirting/initiation behaviors to signal the men they wish to attract (McCormick & Jones, 1989). Therefore, with women being better able to transmit and understand initiation messages, as well as having a greater range of initiation skills it can be explained why women would report using more self-presentation tactics in initiating a short-term relationship on vacation.

The initiation strategies reported by women are in accord with past research findings and with an evolutionary perspective. Low (1979) and Tooke and Camire (1991) argued that females enhance their physical appearance in order to attract potential mates. In doing so, females communicate a willingness for a relationship, in addition to providing cues to fertility and reproductive success. According to Tooke and Camire (1991) males and females will engage in tactics that complement the mate selection criteria of the opposite sex. Thus females highlight their physical appearance, as they know this is an important feature in securing a potential mate.

Intrasexual competition and intersexual choice (Darwin, 1909) are carried out with the tactic of positive self-promotion. Exaggerating specific characteristics that will make women appear to be the most alluring compared to other same-sex competitors and make them the most attractive to potential sex partners is the primary goal of positive self-promotion. With this tactic, women portray themselves in a way that makes them emerge as the most attractive potential partner.

The use of the interpersonal involvement strategy suggests that females attract potential mates by showing interest in building a relationship with the target. Building a relationship and common bond is important to females when engaging in casual sex as it may suggest more of a lasting commitment (Sprecher & Regan, 1996). Christopher and Frandsen (1990) found that the importance of emotional and physical closeness is greater for females than it is for males. Thus, this strategy may be carried out more for the benefit of females than for males. If males reciprocate the behavior of interpersonal involvement, then females may be more willing to go forward with the relationship.

The results regarding self-promotion strategies used to initiate short-term relationships on vacation are comparable to previous findings on initiation strategies. Although past research has primarily focused on initiation strategies for long-term relationships or has only evaluated the perceived effectiveness of self-promotion tactics for short-term relationships, the data from this study seem to parallel past research. Many of the same initiation strategies such as highlighting one's physical appearance through body and clothing, and communicating trust, sincerity, and kindness were reported to be used in initiating long-term relationships as well as in initiating a short-term relationship on vacation. The findings from this study suggest that initiating short-term relationships can be similar in method to initiating a long-term relationship. This can be beneficial as sometimes short-term relationships can develop into long-term relationships.

Limitations and Future Considerations

As with any study, there are limitations that should be kept in mind during the evaluation of research. First, in terms of methodological issues, data was collected using self-report questionnaires. Social desirability is something that must be accounted for with methods employing self-report, especially with such a sensitive topic as sex. For example, females may have held back reporting if they initiated a short-term relationship on vacation to protect their reputation. Whereas for men, they may have over reported initiating short-term relationships to increase their social status. Future research should use a different methodological approach such as observation to eliminate social desirability factors. However, it is important to note that the use of anonymous questionnaires may have mitigated social desirability pressures for participants in this

study. Observation methods could prove useful in examining initiation strategies and exactly how they are communicated to potential partners.

Second, this study reported data only for short-term relationships that took place in a vacation setting. Further studies should compare the reported actions that took place on vacation to those that take place in short-term relationships in a home environment. Being able to compare differing contexts in which short-term relationships occur will provide insight to people's communicative and behavioral patterns while at home and on vacation.

Third, demographics of the participants of this study are also of concern. Although participants were recruited from three different universities, college students are not always a representative sample of the overall population. Hence the generalizability of the findings is unclear. Exploring such variables as education level, socioeconomic status, religious affiliation, and race/ethnicity and the importance they carry on short-term relationships would allow for a further understanding and generalization of short-term relationships.

Other areas of research could also benefit by examining short-term relationships initiated on vacation. Future studies should examine self-disclosure practices that take place between individuals involved in a short-term relationship on vacation. Investigating areas such as topics of disclosure, motives behind disclosure, and levels of disclosure could provide a wealth of information on short-term relationships and their development. Furthermore, health communication scholars could use this type of research to examine the communication practices that occur in these relationships, as well as the sexual practices that take place. Exploring topics such as sexual history disclosure,

contraception use, and other safe sex practices will further and enhance our current understanding of short-term relationships.

Conclusion

The results of this study revealed that short-term relationships do occur, but are rare when people go away on vacation. Men reported communicating more interest in initiating short-term relationships on vacation than did women and more influential factors. However, both men and women reported interpersonal factors, such as increasing the probability of a long-term relationship as motivating them to initiate a short-term relationship on vacation. Women were more selective of their potential partners, as well as reported using more initiation strategies than men. Moreover, the characteristics named by females and males as preferred for a potential short-term partner indicated evaluation for long-term success. Good earning potential, college graduate, physical attractiveness, good sense of humor, and kind and understanding were characteristics named by women, whereas men identified physical attractiveness, sexy, and aggressive as important characteristics. From an evolutionary perspective, all of these characteristics assist in the evaluation of a long-term relationship with a potential partner. Finally, some of the initiation strategies communicated in these short-term relationships correspond with initiation strategies used for long-term relationships, with women reporting to use more initiation strategies.

This study will hopefully lend itself to a better understanding of the world we live in. Although short-term relationships are not widely accepted in North American society, this study has shown that they share similar premises with long-term relationships. The same types of factors that motivate people who initiate long-term relationships can often

motivate people who initiate short-term relationships. In addition, similar characteristics are sought in potential partners for both types of relationships, and short-term relationships are often initiated in comparable manners to long-term relationships.

Topics concerning sex and the communication and behaviors surrounding it can be difficult to study, as it is such a sensitive issue. Scholars such as Charles Darwin and Alfred Kinsey, to name a few, have opened the eyes of many people with their groundbreaking investigations into sex. Research into such topics needs to continue as they carry great implications into various other aspects of our existence. Darwin, Kinsey and countless others have paved the way and we must continue to explore the unknown.

References

- Afifi, W.A., & Faulkner, S.L. (2000). On being 'just friends': The frequency and impact of sexual activity in cross-sex friendships. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 17*, pp. 205-222.
- Buck, R. (1984). *The communication of emotion*. New York: Guilford.
- Buss, D.M., & Barnes, M. (1986). Preferences in human mating. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 50*, pp. 559-570.
- Buss, D.M., & Schmitt, D.P. (1993). Sexual strategies theory: An evolutionary perspective on human mating. *Psychological Review, 100*, pp. 204-232.
- Canary, D.J., & Zelley, E. (1990). Current research programs on relational maintenance behaviors. In M.E. Roloff (Ed.), *Communication Yearbook, 23*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Christopher, F.S., & Frandsen, M.M. (1990). Strategies of influence in sex and dating. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 7*, pp. 89-105.
- Clatterbuck, G.W. (1980). A metatheoretical perspective on interpersonal attraction: The role of communication constructs. In B.W. Morse & L. A. Phelps (Eds.), *Interpersonal communication: A relational perspective* (pp. 119-131). Minneapolis: Burgess.
- Dainton, M., & Aylor, B. (2001). A relational uncertainty analysis of jealousy, trust, and maintenance in long-distance versus geographically close relationships. *Communication Quarterly, 49*, pp. 172-188.
- Darwin, C. (1909). *The origin of species*. New York: The Collier Press.

- Dawkins, R. (1986). Wealth, polygyny, and reproductive success. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 9, pp. 190-191.
- Desiderato, L.L., & Crawford, H.J. (1995). Risky sexual behavior in college students: Relationship between number of sexual partners, disclosure of previous risky behavior, and alcohol use. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 24, pp. 55-67.
- Duck, S.W., Rutt, D.J., Hurst, M., & Strejc, H. (1991). Some evident truths about conversations in everyday relationships: All communication is not created equal. *Human Communication Research*, 18, pp. 228-267.
- Eiser, J.R., & Ford, N. (1995). Sexual relationships on holiday: A case of sexual disinhibition. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 12, pp. 323-339.
- Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. Garden City, NY: Anchor/Doubleday.
- Guerrero, L.K., & Andersen, P.A. (1998). The dark side of jealousy and envy: Desire, delusion, desperation, and destructive communication. In B.H. Spitzberg & W.R. Cupach (Eds.), *The dark side of close relationships* (pp. 33-70). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Herold, E.S., Maticka-Tyndale, E., & Mewhinney, D. (1998). Predicting intentions to engage in casual sex. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 15, pp. 502-516.
- Herold, E.S., & Mewhinney, D. (1993). Gender differences in casual sex and AIDS prevention: A survey of dating bars. *Journal of Sex Research*, 30, pp. 36-43.

- Josiam, B.M., Dietrich, U.C., & Smeaton, G. (1998). An analysis of the sexual, alcohol and drug related behavioural patterns of students on spring break. *Tourism Management, 19*, pp. 501-513.
- Kenrick, D.T., Groth, G.E., Trost, M.R., & Sadalla, E.K. (1993). Integrating evolutionary and social exchange perspectives on relationships: Effects of gender, self-appraisal, and involvement level on mate selection criteria. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 64*, pp. 951-969.
- Kenrick, D.T., Sadalla, E.K., Groth, G.E., & Trost, M.R. (1990). Evolution, traits, and the stages of human courtship: Qualifying the parental investment model. *Journal of Personality, 58*, pp. 97-116.
- Klein, R.C.A., & Milardo, R.M. (2000). The social context of couple conflict: Support and criticism from informal third parties. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 117*, pp. 618-637.
- Low, B.S. (1979). Sexual selection and human ornamentation. In N. Changnon & W. Irons (Eds.), *Evolutionary Theory and Human Social Behavior*, (pp. 249-257). Boston: Duxbury.
- Maticka-Tyndale, E., Herold, E.S., & Mewhinney, D. (1998). Casual sex on spring break: Intentions and behaviors of Canadian students. *Journal of Sex Research, 35*, pp. 254-264.
- McCormick, N.B., & Jones, A.J. (1989). Gender differences in nonverbal flirtation. *Journal of Sex Education and Therapy, 15*, pp. 271-282.

- Mewhinney, D.M., Herold, E.S., & Maticka-Tyndale, E. (1995). Sexual scripts and risk-taking of Canadian university students on spring break in Daytona Beach Florida. *The Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality*, 4, pp. 273-288.
- Parks, M. (2000). Communication networks and relationship life cycles. In S.W. Duck (Ed.), *Handbook of Personal Relationships* (2nd ed), (pp. 351-372). Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.
- Paul, E.L., McManus, B., & Hayes, A. (2000). "Hookups": Characteristics and correlates of college students' spontaneous and anonymous sexual experiences. *Journal of Sex Research*, 37, pp. 76-88.
- Peplau, L.A., & Spalding, L.R. (2000). The close relationships of lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals. In C. Hendrick & S.S. Hendrick (Eds.), *Close relationships: A sourcebook* (pp. 111-123). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Regan, P.C. (1998). What if you can't get what you want? Willingness to compromise ideal mate selection standards as a function of sex, mate value and relationship context. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 24, pp. 1294-1319.
- Regan, P.C., & Dreyer, C.S. (1999), Lust? Love? Status? Young adults' motives for engaging in casual sex. *Journal of Psychology and Human Sexuality*, 11, pp. 1-24.
- Sprecher, S., & Regan, P.C. (2002). Liking some things (in some people) more than others: Partner preferences in romantic relationships and friendships. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 19, pp. 463-481.

- Stewart, S., Stinnett, H., & Rosenfeld, L.B. (2000). Sex differences in desired characteristics of short-term and long-term relationship partners. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 17, pp. 843-853.
- Taraban, C.B., Hendrick, S.S., & Hendrick, C. (1998). Loving and liking. In P.A. Andersen & L.K. Guerrero (Eds.), *Handbook of communication and emotion: Research, theory, applications, and contexts* (pp. 331-351). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Tooke, W., & Camire, L. (1991). Patterns of deception in intersexual mating strategies. *Ethology & Sociobiology*, 12, pp. 345-364.
- Trivers, R.L. (1972). Parental investment and sexual selection. In B. Campbell (Ed.), *Sexual selection and the descent of man* (pp. 136-179).
- Trost, M.R., & Alberts, J.K. (1998). An evolutionary view on understanding sex effects in communicating attraction. In D.J. Canary and K. Dindia (Eds.), *Sex differences and similarities in communication: Critical essays and empirical investigations of sex and gender in interaction* (pp. 233-255). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- Vangelisti, A.L., Knapp, M.L., & Daly, J.A. (1990). Conversational narcissism. *Communication Monographs*, 57, pp. 251-274.

Appendices

APPENDIX A: SHORT-TERM RELATIONSHIPS QUESTIONNAIRE

Survey of Short-term Romantic Relationships on Vacation

Thank you for participating in my study. This survey consists of five sections. Please read the directions carefully and answer the questions as completely and truthfully as possible. **For the purpose of this study, a short-term romantic relationship is defined as a consensually agreed upon relationship lasting the duration of a vacation and that includes sexual activity with this previously unknown person. Sexual activity includes oral sex, anal sex, and sexual intercourse. Please keep these definitions in mind while completing the survey.**

I. Please tell me about yourself.

1. How old are you (in years): _____

2. Male ☐ Female ☐

3. Year in school: Freshman ☐ Sophomore ☐ Junior ☐
Senior ☐ Graduate ☐

4. Major in school: _____

5. What is your current relationship status:

Single ☐ Married ☐ Divorced ☐ Widowed ☐

If Dating, please indicate which level

- ☐ "Friends with benefits" – seeing someone but wanting to stay friends with no commitment
- ☐ Hanging out together sometimes, but not officially "going out" with each other yet
- ☐ Casual dating, still going out with other people
- ☐ Dating within a group of friends (going out with more than one person in the group)
- ☐ Going out with only one person in a group of friends, but rarely go out alone with partner
- ☐ Going out with only one person, regularly do things alone together

6. Where did you go for Spring Break? _____

7. Did you initiate a relationship over vacation?

Yes ☐ No ☐

8. In your best estimate, did you initiate a short-term romantic relationship or a long-term romantic relationship over Spring Break? (*Remember, a short-term relationship is defined as a relationship lasting only during your vacation, and a long-term relationship is one that continues after the vacation.*)

Short-term ☐

Long-term ☐

II. What are your thoughts on casual sex?

Please mark the number that best describes your response to each statement.

		Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
9.	If you just met someone appealing and you wanted to have sex, you believe you would.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	You would feel guilty if you had sex with someone you just met.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	It would be against your personal beliefs or standards to have sex with someone you have just met.	1	2	3	4	5

12. Have you ever had casual sex in the past?

Yes ☐

No ☐

III. Thinking in general about short-term relationships, which factors would be important in influencing you to engage in a short-term relationship while on vacation?

Please mark the number that best describes your response to each statement.

		Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
13.	I would engage in a short-term relationship for sexual desire.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	I would engage in a short-term relationship because I am lonely.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	I would engage in a short-term relationship because the other person is attractive.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	I would engage in a short-term relationship because I was under the influence of alcohol or drugs.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	I would engage in a short-term relationship because there are no long-term obligations.	1	2	3	4	5

		Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
18.	I would engage in a short-term relationship because I was urged by others.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	I would engage in a short-term relationship to increase the probability of a long-term relationship.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	I would engage in a short-term relationship to go against social norms.	1	2	3	4	5
21.	I would engage in a short-term relationship if the other person had suggestive clothing or behavior.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	I would engage in a short-term relationship to gain sexual experience.	1	2	3	4	5
23.	I would engage in a short-term relationship if there was mutual attraction.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	I would engage in a short-term relationship to increase my social status.	1	2	3	4	5
25.	I would engage in a short-term relationship for pleasure.	1	2	3	4	5
26.	I would engage in a short-term relationship to hurt or anger my long-term partner.	1	2	3	4	5
27.	I would engage in a short-term relationship because the other person implied they would commit to a relationship with me.	1	2	3	4	5
28.	I would engage in a short-term relationship to fit in with the behavior of my peer group.	1	2	3	4	5
29.	I would engage in a short-term relationship because I was in a party situation.	1	2	3	4	5
30.	I would engage in a short-term relationship due to the absence of my long-term partner.	1	2	3	4	5
31.	I would engage in a short-term relationship to give the other person sexual pleasure.	1	2	3	4	5
32.	I would engage in a short-term relationship because I was raped by the other.	1	2	3	4	5
33.	I would engage in a short-term relationship because there was mutual trust and friendship.	1	2	3	4	5
34.	I would engage in a short-term relationship because I was on vacation.	1	2	3	4	5
35.	I would engage in a short-term relationship because I had the spontaneous urge.	1	2	3	4	5
36.	I would engage in a short-term relationship to feel attractive.	1	2	3	4	5
37.	I would engage in a short-term relationship because there was contraception available.	1	2	3	4	5

		Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
38.	I would engage in a short-term relationship because the other person was willing to have casual sex.	1	2	3	4	5
39.	I would engage in a short-term relationship because of sexual frustration or celibacy.	1	2	3	4	5
40.	I would engage in a short-term relationship if the setting was dark and private.	1	2	3	4	5
41.	I would engage in a short-term relationship if my home environment was abusive.	1	2	3	4	5
42.	I would engage in a short-term relationship for sexual experimentation.	1	2	3	4	5

IV. What characteristics would be important to you in a short-term romantic relationship partner?

Please mark the number that best describes your response to the statement: It is important to me that my short-term romantic partner has the following characteristic. Please do this for every characteristic listed below.

		Not Very Important				Very Important
43.	Kind and understanding	1	2	3	4	5
44.	Religious	1	2	3	4	5
45.	Exciting personality	1	2	3	4	5
46.	Creative and artistic	1	2	3	4	5
47.	Good housekeeper	1	2	3	4	5
48.	Intelligent	1	2	3	4	5
49.	Good earning capacity	1	2	3	4	5
50.	Wants children	1	2	3	4	5
51.	Easygoing	1	2	3	4	5
52.	Good Hereditary	1	2	3	4	5
53.	College graduate	1	2	3	4	5
54.	Physically attractive	1	2	3	4	5
55.	Healthy	1	2	3	4	5
56.	Aggressive	1	2	3	4	5
57.	Emotionally stable	1	2	3	4	5
58.	Friendly	1	2	3	4	5
59.	Popular	1	2	3	4	5
60.	Powerful	1	2	3	4	5
61.	Sexy	1	2	3	4	5
62.	Wealthy	1	2	3	4	5

		Not Very Important			Very Important	
63.	Ambitious	1	2	3	4	5
64.	Good sense of humor	1	2	3	4	5
65.	High social status	1	2	3	4	5
66.	Dominant	1	2	3	4	5

If you were involved in a short-term relationship while on vacation please continue. If you were not involved in a short-term relationship over vacation, you can stop here. Please turn in your completed questionnaire when you are ready.

V. How did you attract your romantic relationship partner while on vacation?

Please mark the number that best describes how often each act was performed while on vacation.

		Never			Very Frequently	
67.	I spent money on him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
68.	I wore cologne/perfume.	1	2	3	4	5
69.	I played "hard to get" with him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
70.	I wore revealing clothing around him/her	1	2	3	4	5
71.	I wore certain shoes to appear taller/thinner.	1	2	3	4	5
72.	I appeared to be trusting and considerate to him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
73.	I tried to sound intelligent around him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
74.	I wore padded clothing.	1	2	3	4	5
75.	I walked with a swing or bounce.	1	2	3	4	5
76.	I appeared sincere to him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
77.	I acted unconcerned about material things.	1	2	3	4	5
78.	I acted dominant around him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
79.	I wore expensive label clothes.	1	2	3	4	5
80.	I "sucked in" my stomach when around him/her	1	2	3	4	5
81.	I acted mature around him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
82.	I wore tight clothing to appear thin to him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
83.	I acted friendly and sociable him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
84.	I made myself appear "sweet and innocent" around him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
85.	I lead him/her to believe that they could have sex with me.	1	2	3	4	5
86.	I flaunted my career possibilities around him/her.	1	2	3	4	5

		Never Very Frequently				
87.	I acted polite around him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
88.	I lead him/her to believe that I am promiscuous.	1	2	3	4	5
89.	I wore facial makeup.	1	2	3	4	5
90.	I tried to make him/her feel uncertain about my feelings for them.	1	2	3	4	5
91.	I acted interested in what him/her said.	1	2	3	4	5
92.	I tried to impress him/her friends.	1	2	3	4	5
93.	I surrounded myself with “inferior” members of my own sex to appear “superior” to him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
94.	I lead him/her to believe that other males/females were attracted to them even when there wasn’t.	1	2	3	4	5
95.	I acted interested in starting a long-term relationship with him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
96.	I hung out with attractive members of my own sex to appear popular to him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
97.	I acted uninterested and/or unimpressed in certain situations with him/her.	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for your participation!

APPENDIX B: UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA CONSENT FORM

SUBJECT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

TITLE: Short-term Romantic Relationships Survey

INVESTIGATOR: Aneta Milojevic
Department of Communication Studies
University of Montana
Liberal Arts 301
406-243-6604
aneta.milojevic@umontana.edu

This consent form may contain words that are new to you. If you read any words that are not clear to you, please ask the person who gave you this form to explain them to you.

You are being asked to take part in a research study investigating the initiation and experience of consensual short-term romantic relationships. If you agree to respond to this survey, you will be asked to think about your thoughts and experiences concerning short-term romantic relationships initiated on vacation. You will also be asked to respond to questions regarding your sexual activity, as well as your use of alcohol and/or drugs while on Spring Break. You will be given 20-30 minutes to respond, but you may not need the entire time.

Your decision to participate in this study is completely voluntary. You may refuse to take part in or you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are normally entitled. Responding to some of the items might cause you to think about past relationships that make you uncomfortable. Please do not continue if you feel you cannot do so. There is no promise that you will receive any benefit from taking part in this study. However, your participation will give personal relationship scholars an opportunity to better understand short-term romantic relationships. At the completion of the survey you will be given a debriefing sheet with contact information for local services if you have any concerns.

Your responses for this survey are anonymous, so please **do not** put your name nor any identifying markings anywhere on the survey. Only the researcher and other approved research members will have access to the data files. The data will be stored in a locked file cabinet, and your signed consent form will be stored in a cabinet separate from the data. The results of this research will be compiled for my graduate thesis and may be submitted to be published, but your name will not be connected to the results.

Although we believe that the risk of taking part in this study is minimal, the following liability statement is required in all University of Montana consent forms:

"In the event that you are injured as a result of this research you should individually seek appropriate medical treatment. If the injury is caused by the negligence of the University or any of its employees, you may be entitled to reimbursement or compensation pursuant to the Comprehensive State Insurance Plan established by the Department of Administration under the authority of M.C.A., Title 2, Chapter 9. In the event of a claim for such injury, further information may be obtained from the University's Claims representative or University Legal Counsel. (Reviewed by University Legal Counsel. July 6, 1993)."

If you have any questions concerning this research or wish to find out the results of this study, please contact Aneta Milojevic at (406) 243-6604 or aneta.milojevic@umontana.edu. If you have

any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Research Office at the University of Montana at 406-243-6670.

I have read the above description of this research study. I have been informed of the risks and benefits involved, and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. Furthermore, I have been assured that any future questions I may have will also be answered by a member of the research team. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study. I understand I will receive a copy of this consent form.

Print Your Name Here: _____

Sign Your Name Here: _____ **Date** _____

APPENDIX C: UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS CONSENT FORM

SUBJECT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

TITLE: Short-term Romantic Relationships Survey

INVESTIGATORS: Matt Isbell

Department of Communication Studies
University of Texas at Austin
512-232-4067
matt_isbell@mail.utexas.edu

Aneta Milojevic

Department of Communication
Studies
University of Montana
406-243-6604
aneta.milojevic@umontana.edu

This form provides you with information about the study. The person in charge of this research will also describe this study to you and answer all of your questions. Please read the information below and ask questions about anything you don't understand before deciding whether or not to take part. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you can refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You can stop your participation at any time by simply telling the researcher.

The purpose of this research study is to investigate the initiation and experience of consensual short-term romantic relationships. Approximately 200 subjects will be used in this study. If you agree to respond to this survey, you will be asked to do the following things:

- Think about your thoughts and experiences concerning short-term romantic relationships initiated on vacation.
- Respond to questions regarding your sexual activity, as well as your use of alcohol and/or drugs while on Spring Break.

Total estimated time to participate in the study is 30 minutes. Your decision to participate in this study is completely voluntary. Your refusal will not influence current or future relationships with The University of Texas at Austin. Risks and benefits of being in this study include:

- Thinking about past relationships that make you uncomfortable.
- Thinking about some questionable choices you have made in the past.
- You will receive extra credit for your participation in this study.
- Your participation will give personal relationship scholars an opportunity to better understand short-term romantic relationships.

Your responses for this survey are anonymous, so please **do not** put your name nor any identifying markings anywhere on the survey. The records of this study will be stored securely and kept private. Authorized persons from The University of Texas at Austin, and members of the Institutional Review Board have the legal right to review your research records and will protect the confidentiality of those records to the extent permitted by law. All publications will exclude any information that will make it possible to identify you as a subject.

If you have any questions about the study please ask now. If you have questions later or want additional information, call the researchers conducting the study. Their names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses are at the top of this page.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact Clarke A. Burnham, Ph.D., Chair, The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, (512) 232-4383.

I have read the above information and have sufficient information to make a decision about participating in this study. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX D: UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO CONSENT FORM

SUBJECT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

TITLE: Short-term Romantic Relationships Survey

INVESTIGATOR: Aneta Milojevic

Department of Communication Studies
University of Montana
Liberal Arts 301
406-243-6604
aneta.milojevic@umontana.edu

This consent form may contain words that are new to you. If you read any words that are not clear to you, please ask the person who gave you this form to explain them to you.

You are being asked to take part in a research study investigating the initiation and experience of consensual short-term romantic relationships. If you agree to respond to this survey, you will be asked to think about your thoughts and experiences concerning short-term romantic relationships initiated on vacation. You will also be asked to respond to questions regarding your sexual activity, as well as your use of alcohol and/or drugs while on Spring Break. You will be given 20-30 minutes to respond, but you may not need the entire time.

Your decision to participate in this study is completely voluntary. You may refuse to take part in or you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are normally entitled. Responding to some of the items might cause you to think about past relationships that make you uncomfortable. Please do not continue if you feel you cannot do so. Any new information developed during the course of the research project which may relate to your willingness to continue participation in the study will be provided to you. There is no promise that you will receive any benefit from taking part in this study. However, your participation will give personal relationship scholars an opportunity to better understand short-term romantic relationships. At the completion of the survey you will be given a debriefing sheet with contact information for local services if you have any concerns.

Your responses for this survey are anonymous, so please **do not** put your name nor any identifying markings anywhere on the survey. Only the researcher and other approved research members will have access to the data files. The data will be stored in a locked file cabinet, and your signed consent form will be stored in a cabinet separate from the data. The results of this research will be compiled for my graduate thesis and may be submitted to be published, but your name will not be connected to the results.

This project has been approved by the University of Idaho Human Assurances Committee. If you have any questions concerning this research or wish to find out the results of this study, please contact Aneta Milojevic at (406) 243-6604 or aneta.milojevic@umontana.edu. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Research Office at the University of Idaho at (208) 885-6651.

As a representative of this study, I have explained the purpose, the procedures, the benefits, and the risks that are involved in this research study.

_____ **Date** _____

Aneta Milojevic, Principal Investigator

I have read the above description of this research study. I have been informed of the risks and benefits involved, and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. Furthermore, I have been assured that any future questions I may have will also be answered by a member of the research team. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study. I understand I will receive a copy of this consent form.

Print Your Name Here: _____

Sign Your Name Here: _____ **Date** _____